

more than he may lawfully exercise, converts the kingdom into a tyranny, and remains incorrigible, the people, as the supreme power, may depose him. For the king, he insists, has no strength or authority except from the kingdom, the community over which he freely presides. Nay, a tyrant, like any unsound member of the body which threatens the safety of the other, may be cut off, *i.e.*, put to death when the common consent of the body politic has lawfully condemned him. Buchanan, as we shall see, will only elaborate the same idea.

In his "History of Greater Britain," in which he shows himself more independent, he emphasises again and again the constitutional rights of the people against the usurpations of unconstitutional rulers. He condemns the alienation of the superiority of the English kingdom by King John to Innocent III. on the ground that as "he holds his right as king of a free people, he cannot grant that right to any one against the will of the people." Moreover, the king (still King John) has no right to tax the people to pay Peter's pence to the pope, inasmuch as they have not consented to this exaction. Taxation without the express consent of the people is unlawful, and they are not bound to pay. In this he is only repeating the famous stipulation in Magna Charta; but the fact that he brings clearly out the right of the people, as represented by the barons at least, to give or withhold a subsidy, shows his grasp of a great constitutional principle. He held very strong convictions as to the necessity of guarding this crucial bulwark of constitutional liberty. "As to the levying of taxes," he remarks in another part of his History, "in no case should the power be granted to kings, save in cases of clear necessity; and that necessity should further be one which has arisen without fault of the king himself. . . . Further, it belongs not to the king, nor to his Privy Council, to declare the emergence of any sudden necessity, but only to the Three Estates." Major had, indeed, a soul that could thrill at the name of liberty and warm to indignation at the name of tyranny. His narrative of the deeds of William Wallace, the indomitable, upright patriot who fought for his country's rights against such fearful odds, is instinct with sympathy and enthusiasm, and he has nothing but contempt for the factious Scottish nobility